

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 through 44 are currently pending in the application and subject to an Election of Species Restriction Requirement.

Applicants hereby elect, without traverse, to prosecute the species of invention as set forth in claims 7, 9, 24, 26 and 27. Should the Examiner assert that the foregoing claims are not directed to a single species, Applicants hereby elect, without traverse, to prosecute the species of invention as set forth in claims 9 and 27.

Applicants consider claims 1, 15 and 40 to be generic, and note that upon allowance of a generic claim, claims respectively depending therefrom directed to a non-elected species would also be allowable. In the case of claim 1, this would encompass claims 2-6, 8, 10-14 and 43; in the case of claim 15, this would encompass claims 16-23, 25, 28-32 and 34-39; in the case of claim 40, this would encompass claims 41, 42 and 44.

Applicants respectfully request an action on the merits of claims 1, 7, 9, 15, 24, 26, 27 and 40.

**Previously Submitted Information Disclosure Statements**

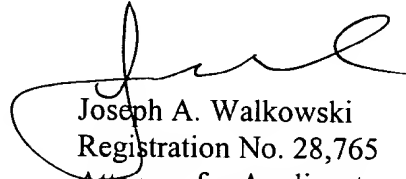
Please note that Information Disclosure Statements were filed in the above-referenced application on December 17, 2001 and on May 9, 2002, but that initialed copies of the Form PTO-1449s that accompanied the Information Disclosure Statements have not yet been returned to the undersigned attorney. In the case of the Information Disclosure Statement of December 17, 2001, no copy whatsoever has been returned to Applicants' representative. In the case of the Information Disclosure Statement of May 9, 2002, copies of the substitute 1449 forms were signed and dated by the Examiner, but not initialed to indicate that the references were considered. It is respectfully requested that the information cited in the Information Disclosure Statements and listed on the Form PTO-1449s be considered and made of record in the above-referenced application and that initialed copies of the Form PTO-1449s evidencing such consideration be returned to Applicants' undersigned attorney.

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Serial No. 09/893,337

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that each of claims 1, 7, 9, 15, 24, 26, 27 and 40 be considered on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,



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